

# **The Right Path**

## **Towards Gnosis of the Lord of Creation**

By

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**The Imam Rassi Society's translation of *Sab l ar-Rash d ila Ma'rifa Rabbil-'Ub d:***

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful...

### **Author's Introduction**

All praise is due to Allah, and peace be upon His chosen slaves. All praise is due to Allah, the One in which there is no god but He—the All-Just, the All-Wise. He is the Most Truthful in that which He promises the believers of the Blessed Paradise, as well as that which He threatens the disobedient with of remaining in the fiery torment forever. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, the one endowed with the Noble Qur'an and the guide to the right path. May Allah's blessings be upon him and his Progeny, those successors after him who uphold the religion of uprightness.

As to what follows—I was asked by some righteous brothers about the main issues concerning the foundations of the religion, as well as the freeing of the Lord of Creation from the statements of those of falsehood. I was also asked to gather all of that with clear proofs, so that one can become firmly established in good deeds, God willing. Therefore, I have replied to him concerning that which he sought as well as conveyed that which he desired and established for him those sure principles. I have gathered for him the most important issues of benefit—God willing—insomuch that the one who believes in it will be firmly established and guided towards the highest stations of confirmation. We do this hoping for reward from Allah, as well as for aid toward righteousness and God-wariness as is stated in His Revelation.

This desire is increased based upon the statement of the Exalted **{Cooperate in righteousness and God-wariness} (Q. 5:2)**, as well as from his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((One does not guide his Muslim brother to the good by means of a word of truth and then teach it to him except that Allah will increase him in guidance or deliver him from ruin. To Allah, it is similar to giving life to a soul. Whoever gives life to it is similar to one who gives life to all humanity)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((O 'Ali. If Allah were to guide a man to the good by your hand, it would be better for you than anything that the sun shines on)).

There are many more examples from the well-known narrated traditions and statements. We ask Allah to increase us in illumination and appoint for us a victorious authority!

### [Divine Oneness]

Know that the first obligation for the morally responsible person is the knowledge and gnosis of Allah, the Exalted, as well as knowledge of His Attributes. Verily, that is the head of knowledge that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, mentioned in his reply to the one who asked him to teach him the subtleties of knowledge. He said: ((How is it that you ask me about the subtleties before asking me about the head of knowledge?)) The man then asked: “What is the head of knowledge?” He replied: ((It is that you know Allah with true gnosis)). The man asked: “What is it to know Allah with true gnosis?” He replied:

((It is that you know that He is without likeness or resemblance. It is that you know that He is One God, the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. There is no one like Him, and He has no likeness)).

### [The obligation of contemplation and the importance of gnosis of Allah]

The path to the gnosis of Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—is what Allah related about His Messenger and Friend, Abraham—Allah’s peace and blessings be upon our Prophet, him and both their Progeny—when the Exalted said: **{...and thus did We show Abraham the dominion of the heavens and the earth, that he would be amongst those of certainty. When the night covered him, he saw a star. He said: “This is my Lord.” When it set, he said: “I love not those that set.” When he saw the moon rising, he said: “This is my Lord.” When it set, he said: “Unless my Lord guides me, I shall be amongst the astray folk.” When he saw the sun rising, he said: “This is my Lord. This one is the greatest!” When it set, he said: “O folk, I am indeed free from that which ye associate! Verily, I turn my face towards the One who created the heavens and earth...”}** (Q. 6:75-79).

That is contemplation and thought regarding the dominion of the heavens, earth, what’s between them and what’s in them. These are clear signs that are manifest and evident. They demonstrate order and having been created. There are different varieties of animals with various types, colours, shapes and sounds. They have different compositions as well as manifest and hidden feelings. They have the inspiration towards rectification—large and small. He begins their creation in the wombs as well as transitions them from phase to phase. Therefore, blessed be Allah, the Best of creators!

Whoever considers creation with truth using one’s intellect, as well as how it changes, is formed, created and joined, what transpires of excesses and deficiencies, movement and stillness, and its need for space and time, one knows with certainty that it was brought into existence by a Creator who began it, an Arranger who arranged it and an Owner who created and formed it. It is impossible that such One be a spatial-temporal creation like it—whether part or whole. This is something that a sound intellect guides one towards, and this is something that a right mind realises out of necessity.

Allah sent Messengers with miracles that decisively convinced others of their truth. He sent down with them scriptures that contained explanations of His rulings as well as the manner by which He is to be thanked for His blessings. **{If ye were to count the favour of Allah, ye could not reckon it}** (Q. 16:18). **{...lest the people may not have an argument against Allah after the Messengers}** (Q. 4:165). They are the guides for humankind towards the correct, established path.

He—Glorified be He—indicates by use of the intellect a gnosis by means of signs (or “verses”) that verify His Divine Attributes. He is specified by Dominion, Greatness, Pride and Oneness. The intellect takes one from the state of heedlessness to that of gnosis of the Lord of the Worlds. It removes the doubt caused by corrupt desires and fantasies as well as the blind adherence to the religion of one’s forefathers. One should contemplate the explicit verses of the Book of Allah, the Praiseworthy, as a guide towards the lights of guidance and Divine Oneness, as well as a director for the intellect towards that which is most important in the knowledge of Allah, His Justice and His Truth. **{It is not for thy Lord to commit injustice towards the slaves}** (Q. 41:46). **{Hast thou not contemplated upon the Qur’an or are there seals on the hearts?}** (Q. 47:24).

Allah—Glorified be He—says: **{Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of night and day, and the ships which run upon the sea with that which is of benefit to people, and the water which Allah sends down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing all kinds of beasts therein, and the decree of the winds, and the clouds obedient between heaven and earth: are signs for people of intellect}** (Q. 2:164). He says, Glorified be He: **{Hast they not looked upon the camels—how they were created, the heaven—how it was raised, the mountains—how they were set up and the earth—how it was spread?}** (Q. 88:17-20).

He—Exalted be He—says: **{Man should consider from what he was created} (Q. 86:5). {And how many signs are there...?} (Q. 12:105).** The Qur'an is replete with such examples. It informs those with intellect of its way with contemplation that ennoble the wayfarer until such one comes to know of it with knowledge of certainty. **{He increases in belief those who believe} (Q. 74:31). {...who has made all things good which He created} (Q. 32:7). {Allah is the Creator of all things. He is the One, the Powerful} (Q. 13:16).**

You can never contemplate His Essence, nor can you have gnosis of Him except by means of contemplating His creation. The Appointee (*al-Wa'i*)—May Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—was asked about Divine Oneness. He replied: “Divine Oneness is not to imagine Him.” This is comprehensive wisdom. It is also narrated from him:

Whoever thinks about Allah attains godlessness (*alhad*). Whoever thinks about Allah's creation attains Oneness of Allah (*wahhad*).

The poet says: “In everything there is a sign that proves that He is One.”

It also appears in the reply of Moses, upon him be peace, when he was asked by Pharaoh, may Allah curse him: **{“What is thy Lord?”} (Q. 26:23).** That is to say, “What type of being is He?” He replied to him with what he knows. He replied: **{“The Lord of the heavens, the earth and what is between them, if thou art certain”} (Q. 26:24).** It is narrated that a man asked [i.e. the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, three times about the best of actions. He replied each time: ((Knowledge of Allah)). Then, the man said: “I asked you about actions and you responded with knowledge?” He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, replied:

((Woe unto you! Verily, with knowledge, actions benefit—whether small or great. However, with ignorance, actions do not benefit—whether small or great)).

It is narrated that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((If you were to know Allah with true gnosis, He would teach you with knowledge after which is no ignorance. If you were to learn about Allah with true knowledge, you would remain perpetually as the mountains)).

It is narrated that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Allah divided the intellect into three parts. Whoever possesses it is one of great intellect. Whoever does not possess it is not one of great intellect. They are excellent knowledge of Allah, excellent obedience to Allah and excellent patience with Allah)).

The meaning of the narration is that the one who does not act upon this has not acted with intellect.

### [Proof of Allah's Divine Oneness]

When we come to know and contemplate over the verses of Qur'an utilising the intellect, we come to know that there is a Creator and Arranger. We come to realise, know, witness and believe that it is Allah, the One with whom is no partner or a second god with Him. **{Lo! Each god would have taken away what he created and some would have exalted themselves over others} (Q. 23:91), {...the heavens and earth would be ruined} (Q. 23:71)** due to conflicts. There would come to us additional messengers and scriptures.

He—Glorified be He—says: **{Allah—There is no god but He; the Ever Living, the Self-Existent} (Q. 2:255). {Verily, thy God is only Allah. There is no god but He} (Q. 18:98).**

It is narrated on the authority of Ubayy bin Ka'b that the idolaters said to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: “Describe to us your Lord.” Then the verse was revealed: **{Say: He is Allah, the One, the Everlasting. He begets not nor is He begotten. There is no equal unto Him} (Q. 112).** It is narrated from the Appointee—May Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—that those that inquired were Jews and they said: “Describe your Lord to us in detail.” Then this chapter was revealed.

We know that He—Glorified be He—exists. This is because of renewal of created things, as well as the absence of the signs of non-existence. He—Exalted be He—says, and He is the Most Truthful: **{Hast thou not seen that Allah knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? There is no intimate conversation amongst three except that He is the fourth of them. Nor are there five except that He is the sixth of them. No less than that or no more except that He is with them wherever they are; and afterward, on the Day of Resurrection, He shall inform them of what they did. Alas! Allah is the Knower of all things.} (Q. 58:7).**

We know that He is All-Powerful, All-Knowing and Ever-Living. His ability to enact an action proves His Power. His ability towards perfection proves His Knowledge. All of creation operates upon a

system, and this can only be possible by One who is All-Powerful and All-Knowing. One cannot be All-Powerful and All-Knowing unless He is Ever-Living.

He—Glorified be He—is Pre-Existent, not the first of His existents. If He is the One who brought into existence, it is necessary that He not be brought into existence. It would be a vicious cycle (*tasalsal*), and this is impossible. Allah is highly exalted above that!

He—Glorified be He—is Independent because He is without need. Need is a characteristic of bodies, and Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—is not a body or accident (*'ar*). Bodies and accidents are in need of space and place, and this is impossible in respects to Him.

He does not resemble His creation. It would mean that He has a partner in resemblance, and He has no partners. These attributes are firmly established and explicitly mentioned in the Book of Allah, which **{No falsehood can approach it from its front and back—revelation from One Most Wise and Praiseworthy} (Q. 41:42)**. By it, it speaks. The intellect is informed and agreed with. Sufficient for you are the verses of the Qur'an as a truth and evidence.

He—Glorified be He—says: **{Allah—There is no god but He; the Ever Living, the Self-Existent. He is not overtaken by slumber or sleep. Unto Him belong whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. Who is the one that can intercede with Him save by His leave? He knows what is in front of them and behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He wills. His Chair encompasses the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the Exalted, the Magnanimous} (Q. 2:255). {He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. He is the Knower of all things} (Q. 57:3). {And with Him are the keys of the Unseen. None but He knows them. He knows what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain amidst the darkness of the earth—wet or dry—but that it is in a clear book} (Q. 6:59). {Even if thou were to speak aloud, He verily knows the secret and that which is more hidden} (Q. 20:7). {And Allah has power over all things} (Q. 2:284). {Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Certainly, He is! He is the All-Wise Creator} (Q. 36:81). {...the Knower of the Unseen and seen, the Great and Highly Exalted} (Q. 13:9). {There is nothing like unto Him. He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing} (Q. 42:11). {He is with thee wheresoever ye may be} (Q. 58:4). {O people, Thou art dependent upon Allah, and Allah is the Independent and Praiseworthy} (Q. 35:15). {Whosoever is ungrateful, Allah is Independent from the worlds} (Q. 3:97). {Whosoever is stingy—such one is only stingy against himself. Allah is Independent and thou art dependent} (Q. 47:38). {O people! Remember Allah's grace toward thee! Is there any Creator other than Allah who provides for thee from the heavens and earth? There is no God save Him. Whither then are ye turned?} (Q. 35:3). {Their messengers said: “Is there doubt concerning Allah, the Creator of the heavens and earth? He calls thee that He may forgive thee thy sins and reprieve thee unto an appointed term.” They said: “Ye are but mortals like us, who would fain turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Then bring some clear authority} (Q. 14:10)**. This is repeated throughout the Noble Qur'an.

Allah—Glorified be He—will not be seen—whether in this world or the Hereafter. This is because if He could be seen now, it necessitates that the possibility of His Vision remain perpetually. He says: **{Vision reaches Him not; rather, He reaches all vision. He is Most Subtle, Most Aware} (Q. 6:103)**. He—Glorified be He—says to Moses, upon him be peace: **{Thou shall never see Me} (Q. 7:143)**. He negates the Vision absolutely with the particle **{never (*lan*)}**, which denotes perpetuity. He restricted its possibility to an impossibility—namely the permanence of the mountain.

This question was only on behalf of his people though it was upon his tongue, upon him be peace. Due to the infallibility of the Prophets, he sought that and then repented to Allah for their request. By their question, they attributed to Allah that which is the greatest of the major sins. This is evident from His words—Exalted be He: **{They asked Moses for something greater than that, for they said: “Show us Allah clearly!” They were seized with thunder} (Q. 4:153)**.

It is narrated on the authority of A'isha that she was asked: 'Did Muhammad see his Lord?' She replied:

O you! My hair has stood up based upon what you said! Whoever told you these three things has lied. Whoever has said that Muhammad saw his Lord has lied. **{Vision reaches him not; rather, He reaches all vision. He is Most Subtle, Most Aware} (Q. 6:103)**. Whoever has said that Muhammad knows what will happen tomorrow has lied. **{No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land one will die. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware} (Q. 31:34)**. Whoever says that Muhammad concealed anything of inspiration has lied. **{O Messenger, convey what was**

**revealed unto thee from thy Lord. If thou doeth it not, ye hath not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect thee from the people. Verily, Allah guides not the ungrateful (or “disbelieving”) people} (Q. 5:67).**

It is not possible that Allah—Exalted be He—dies because nonexistence is a quality of a body and an accident. Allah is not a body or an accident. This is because it is necessary that He would be measured, and Allah is not a Being that can be measured. This is based on His statement: **{He is the First, the Last} (Q. 57:3). {There is nothing like unto Him} (Q. 42:11). {Everything shall perish except His Face} (Q. 28:88). {Everyone upon it shall perish, and the Face of thy Lord, the Possessor of Majesty and Nobility} (Q. 55:26-27).**

Allah is above begetting and being begotten. Begetting and incarnation do not befit Him because they are attributes of bodies. Allah—Exalted be He—is not a body. He—Exalted be He—says: **{He begets not nor is He begotten. There is no equal unto Him} (Q. 112:3-4).** He also says: **{Never did Allah take unto Himself a son or another god...} (Q. 23:91). {Say the Jews: “Ezra is the son of Allah.” Say the Christians: “Christ is the son of Allah.” That is their words uttered from their mouths—a word of those who disbelieved from before. May Allah destroy them! How they are deluded!} (Q. 9:30). {Say: “All praise is due to Allah who has not taken a son. There is no partner who shares in [His] dominion. He has no protector out of weakness”} (Q. 17:111).**

### [Divine Justice (*al-‘Adl*)]

It is religiously obligatory for the morally responsible person to know that Allah—Exalted be He—is All-Just and All-Wise. There are no obscenities, oppression and jest in His actions. This is proven by the intellect and textual proof.

Regarding the intellectual proof, if He—Glorified be He—is most knowing of what is obscene. An obscenity is oppression and jest. He is independent of such and is most knowing of that which He is independent from. Since that is the case, He does not commit such actions. He does not desire it, He is not pleased with it and He does not command it. How could He be pleased with it Himself while He is All-Just and All-Wise?

Regarding the textual proof, Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, Allah is not unjust to people a bit. But, it is the people that are unjust to themselves} (Q. 10:44), {And thy Lord will not treat any of them unjustly} (Q. 18:49), {Dost thou think that We created thee in jest? Verily, to Us shall ye return} (Q. 23:115), {...and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and earth. “O our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain! Glorified be Thee, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire} (Q. 3:191).**

All of His actions—Glorified be He—as well as His commands and prohibitions are due to wisdom and rectification. It is explicitly stated in the verses of the Noble Book in many places. It repeats the words **{All-Wise}** and **{All-Knowing}** in a number of verses. It is obligatory to believe that. Even if the wisdom of some things is hidden from us, He knows it. Allah is highly Exalted above doing anything without wisdom! **{That is the assumption of those who disbelieve. Woe be unto those who disbelieve from the Fire!} (Q. 38:27).** ‘Ali—May Allah ennoble his face—was asked: “What is Divine Justice?” He replied: “It is that you don’t falsely accuse Him” This is comprehensive wisdom!

Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—does not recompense anyone except for their deeds. He does not punish anyone except for what they earn, and He does not reward anyone except for what they earn. This is because He is All-Just and the Truth. He—Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, Allah commands justice, goodness, and giving towards kin and forbids immorality, evil, and oppression. He exhorts thee that thou may remember} (Q. 16:90).** He does not command something except that He is pleased with it and desires it.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{...He shall recompense those who works evil by what they earned. He shall recompense those who do good with good} (Q. 53:31).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{Whosoever does a good deed does so for his own soul. Whosoever does an evil deed—it is against him. Thy Lord is not unjust to His slaves a bit} (Q. 41:46).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{How then, when We shall gather them on the Day in which is no doubt and every soul shall be recompensed for what it had earned? They shall not be wronged} (Q. 3:25).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{Verily, the Hour is coming—though I have hidden it—insomuch that every soul shall be recompensed for what it strove for} (Q. 20:15).** He—Exalted be He—says: **{No one shall bear the burdens of another} (Q. 6:164).**

### [Concerning the actions of the slaves]

All actions of the slaves—whether good or bad, first or last—are not created in them. Rather, they [i.e. the slaves] are the sources of them by their choice. They are responsible for them, and they are to blame for them as proven by the intellect and textual evidence.

The attribution of an action always returns to the doer. Everyone with intellect knows that. Allah—Exalted be He—says: **{Whosoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it. Whosoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it} (Q. 99:7-8). {...recompense for what they used to do} (Q. 56:24). {“Work, O Family of David, out of gratitude...”} (Q. 34:13). {...except those who believe and work righteous deeds...} (Q. 38:24). {Verily, those who distort Our verses...} (Q. 41:40). {...they preferred blindness rather than guidance...} (Q. 41:17).**

Allah describes them with strength and weakness. They differ in the application of such by means of their choice, as the one with intellect can attest. **{Then, whosoever wills—let him believe, and whosoever wills—let him disbelieve} (Q. 18:29). {Then, whosoever works righteous deeds while he is a believer—he shall not be deprived of his effort. Verily, We are for him recorders} (Q. 21:94). {...and We record what they have brought forth and what they have left behind...} (Q. 36:12).** He attributes all of their actions to them.

In every predatory animal, there is ability specific to it. There are legs to run, claws to attack, eyes to see and ears to hear. If all of that is from Allah as those of falsehood say, why should we praise one who



performs a good action and condemn one who performs a bad deed? Things such as colours, length and shortness are not by their choice; rather, it is from Allah.

Why does Allah reward them for their good deeds? Why does He punish them for their bad deeds? Why should He appoint the assigning of reward for something other than their deeds?

Regarding the concept of Earning (*al-Kasb*) that they hold to and attribute to the slaves, it does not make sense. It is futile, and by such, they intend to cover the nakedness and disgrace of their doctrine. They attempt to ward off the proofs that the scholars of Divine Justice force them to admit, yet they can't. They try to extinguish the light of truth by their mouths. **{They desire to extinguish the Light of Allah by their mouths, but Allah completes His Light though the disbelievers hate it} (Q. 61:8).**

Ask them: "Is Earning from their actions or that of Allah—Exalted be He?" If they say that it is from their actions, they have thereby established that actions are from the slave. If they say that it is from Allah, then there must be another earning for the slave and this would lead to a vicious circle. The falsity of their statement is evident.

Qur'anic proofs have been mentioned regarding the attribution of the slave's actions to them. Some of them include: **{...and those who, when they commit an evil deed or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins—Who forgives sins but Allah?—and will not repeat what they did knowingly} (Q. 3:135), {...and ye create falsehood} (Q. 29:17), {And whosoever commits (*yaksib*) an error or sin, then casts (the blame) thereof upon the innocent, hath burdened himself with falsehood and a manifest sin} (Q. 4:112), {...and to them belong other deeds, besides that which they are working} (Q. 23:63).**

There are many explicit narrated traditions regarding that. For example, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Verily, Allah ignores from my Community any whisperings that may occur in their hearts as long as they do not act upon them or say them)).

The proofs are clear from the intellect and the textual evidence that the actions of the slaves are from them. Although the proofs are evident to the sensory perception, one may need greater intellectual proof. Nothing can be proven as sound to an intellect that needs proof for daylight.

#### **[Concerning Predestination (*al-Qa* ) and the Decree (*al-Qadr*)]**

It is impermissible to say that Allah decrees and predestines acts of disobedience. This is due to a false assumption of a faulty meaning. It is that Allah—Exalted be He—created them. We have previously mentioned the acts of the slaves and proven that it is from them. It is the doctrine of a people known as the Qadarites and Fatalists that Allah predestines and decrees acts of disobedience.

Al-H di ila al-Haqq Yahya bin al-Hussein, upon him be peace, saw them enter Sana'a. Their scholars gathered and asked: "From who is sin?" He, upon him be peace, responded: "Who is the sinner?" They became silent, turned around and reproached. One of their theologians said:

He silenced and overcame me due to a discrepancy in my statement. If I were to say that the sinner is the slave, I would have departed from my theological position (*madhhab*). If I were to say that the sinner is Allah, I would have blasphemed.

This is because Allah—Exalted be He—does not permit one to say that He is a sinner—either in their theological position or that of other than them. Therefore, a group of them returned to the theological position of the People of Divine Justice.

The Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, informed us about them with his statement:

((There are two categories of people from my community that will not receive my intercession and Allah has cursed them on the tongue of seventy Prophets: the Murji'ites and the Qadarites)).

He was asked: "O Messenger of Allah, who are the Qadarites?" He replied: ((They are those who commit an act of disobedience and say: "It is from Allah")) In another narration, he was asked: "O Messenger of Allah, who are the Murji'ites?" He replied: ((They are those who state that faith is without deeds)). This is an explicit textual proof and testimony of truth that the Fatalists are the Qadarites.

This is further confirmed by his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: ((The Qadarites are the Magians of this community)). They are the enemies of the Most Merciful, bearers of false witness and the army of the Devil—May Allah curse him! Regarding their being the enemies of the Most Merciful, it is because they oppose the Most Merciful. When the proof will be brought before them on the Day of Judgment that they committed acts of disobedience while knowing that He is not unjust to

them, the Fatalists will respond to Him and say: “You are the one that created disobedience in them and ordered them to do that which they had no power over. They simply obeyed. Now, You take them and punish them for what You did and coerced them to do.”

Regarding their being bearers of false witness, when Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—asks the devils: “Why did you mislead and deviate the slaves?” they will say: “You were the one who mislead and deviated them!” They will not find anyone anywhere to bear witness to them except the Fatalists.

Regarding their being the army of the Devil, they are the ones who side with the Devil. They use as a justification his statement: **{“O my Lord, because Thou hath deviated me...”} (Q. 15:39)**. They say that he did not deserve to be blamed and disassociated from because he did not do anything. Rather, they say, Allah caused him to deviate and go astray. This is the characteristic of anyone who seeks to remove blame from oneself. The most just path is that the one who fits this description is most worthy of the name. And Allah knows best.

#### **[Concerning burdening one beyond his capacity]**

Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—does not burden a soul beyond its capacity and ability. This is because it would be considered an obscenity as the intellect dictates. It has been firmly established with decisive proof that Allah does not commit an obscenity. He says in His Decisive Book: **{Allah burdens not a soul except with what it can bear} (Q. 2:286), {Allah burdens not a soul except by what He has given it} (Q. 65:7), {Be conscious of Allah in what thou art able} (Q. 64:16), {Allah has made pilgrimage to the House an obligation upon the people who art able to find a way} (Q. 3:97).**

Allah’s Messenger—peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny—the Truthful and Trustworthy, the one who did not speak out of caprice, said: ((When you are commanded to do something, do it in what you are able)). He also said concerning the Ansar who had trouble with passing wind in the prayer: ((If you are able to do it while sitting, do it while sitting)). He also said: ((If one is not able to recite the Qur’an, he should recite what is with him)). Also, the pregnant and nursing woman, as well as the one with extreme thirst can break the fast and make it up when their condition subsides.

Regarding these issues, had it not been for the stubbornness of the stubborn and those who do not free the Lord of the Worlds from creation’s attributes, the People of Divine Justice would never seek to prove such while they are cognisant of the Divine Justice of Allah, the Possessor of Majesty.

#### **[Concerning the actions of Allah, the Exalted]**

Allah does not desire injustice. He is not pleased with disbelief for His slaves, and He does not love corruption. The intellect considers such an obscenity, and Allah—Exalted be He—does not commit obscenities. He is highly exalted above that! **{Allah desires not injustice for His slaves} (Q. 40:31). {He is not pleased with disbelief for His slaves} (Q. 39:7). {Allah loves not corruption} (Q. 2:205)**. He—Exalted be He—negates the aforementioned from Himself. Whoever belies such has departed from Islam.

He—Glorified be He—dislikes acts of disobedience, as He—Exalted be He—says: **{All of that is evil and to thy Lord detestable} (Q. 17:38)**. He prohibits from such and threatens the one who does it. He—Exalted be He—says: **{He detests for thee disbelief, disobedience and sins. Those art the righteous} (Q. 49:7)**. He [i.e. the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Allah dislikes frivolity during the prayer, acting obscene during the fast and laughing at the graves)).

If He dislikes such, how can He be pleased with sins greater than those that He prohibits? Verily, the source of His Desire for His slaves is that they make up their minds to do something or avoid it.

Know that due to Allah’s Justice and Wisdom, He does not burden a soul with what it can’t bear. They were taught the right path by the tongue of His Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, as well as encouraged to do so. They were also taught the wrong path and to be on guard against it. They were made to choose even though He has the power to compel and force them. It is as He—Glorified be He—says: **{If Allah willed, He would have guided all people} (Q. 13:31)**. But He also says: **{There is no compulsion in the religion. Truth stands clear from falsehood} (Q. 2:256)**.

One condition of responsibility is that one is promised reward or punishment as recompense. This entails that such person is not compelled or forced. If that is the case, one does not deserve praise or blame as well as reward and punishment. This is known by the intellect by necessity. The idolaters argued this and Allah responded to them, belying them. The one who follows them belongs to the deviant sect of destruction. Similar was the case for those before them. Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{Those who attribute partners to Him shall say: “If Allah had willed, we would not have disbelieved,**



nor would our fathers. We would not have declared [any permissible] thing as prohibited!" Also, in this way, those before them lied until they tasted Our punishment. Say: "Dost thou have any bit of knowledge to offer us? Ye follow nothing but assumptions, and ye do nothing but presume!" (Q. 6:148-149).

He—Exalted be He—also says: {Those who attribute partners to Him say: "If Allah had willed, we would not have worshiped anything other than Him—neither we nor our fathers. We would not have considered holy anything other than Him!" Similarly, those before them did the same thing. What is upon the Messengers except a clear conveyance?} (Q. 16:35).

He—Glorified be He—says that they worship their assumptions. {Verily, assumption does not make independent of the truth in anything} (Q. 10:36). Presumption is lying. He—Exalted be He—says: {And when they commit immorality, they say: "We found our forefathers doing it, and Allah ordered us to do it." Say: "Verily, Allah does not order immorality. Dost thou say about Allah that which ye not know thereof?" Say: "Allah orders justice and to set thy faces to every place of prostration (*masjid*)..."}} (Q. 7:28-29)—that is, justice and excellence.

#### [Concerning provision (*ar-Rizq*)]

Provision is from Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He, as He says in His Decisive Book: {Any blessing to thee is from Allah} (Q. 16:53). {And partake of thy provision—permissible and good} (Q. 16:114). {And there is no creature on the earth except that it relies upon Allah for its provision} (Q. 11:6). {...and how many creatures do not bear its provision? Allah provides its provision as well as for thee} (Q. 29:60). {Kill not thy children out of fear of want. We shall provide for thee as well as for them} (Q. 6:151). {Verily, Allah is the Provider, the Possessor of eternal strength} (Q. 51:58).

By His Power, He guides every animal to seek out its provision as well as to earn it. Allah is the One who makes it easy and assists. There is for every animal the ability to venture and labour based upon the different types of animals—the rational ones and others. {So, glory be to the One in Whose Hand is the dominion of everything! Unto Him shall ye return} (Q. 36:83).

The People of Divine Justice collectively agree that something cannot be called provision unless it is religiously permissible. That is because Allah calls it provision when it is permissible and not prohibited. He—Exalted be He—says: {...and from the fruit of the date palm and the grapes, thou take intoxicants and a goodly provision} (Q. 16:67). He makes provision a source of virtue. {Let the one who has ample provision spend out of his provision, and let the one who has scanty provision spend out of what Allah has given him} (Q. 65:7).

When one knows the Wisdom and Justice of Allah—Glorified be He—in that, as is explicitly stated in His Noble Book, it is a proof that the actions of Allah—Glorified be He—are rooted in wisdom. Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: {If Allah were to grant abundant provision to His slaves, they would rebel in the earth. However, He causes what He wills to descend in due measure. He is, of His slaves, All-Aware and All-Seeing} (Q. 42:27). Allah—Exalted be He—says: {And Allah favours some amongst thee over others in provision} (Q. 16:71). {We distribute amongst them their livelihood in the life of this world. We raise some of them in degrees over others that some may avail others. The Mercy of thy Lord is greater than what they amass} (Q. 43:32).

Among the things that facilitates provision is God-wariness, sincerity in His religion and reliance upon Him. He—Glorified be He—says: {Whosoever is conscious of Allah, He shall make for him a way out. He shall provide provision for him from where he is not aware. Whosoever relies upon Allah, [he shall find] Him to be sufficient} (Q. 42:2-3). He—Exalted be He—says: {If the people of the village had believed and were God-wary, We would have opened for them blessings from the heavens and earth. However, they belied, and We punished them for what they earned} (Q. 7:96). It is related in the Pilgrimage that he used to negate poverty and obtain provision.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((If you rely upon Allah they way He should be relied on, He will grant you provision as He provides for the birds, feeds the hungry and soothes the bellies)).

This is the proof of earning. O Allah! Provide provision for us from Your Grace! O Most Merciful of the Merciful! Raise us by Your Gratitude, O Best of Providers!

#### [Concerning defects and deficiencies]

All defects and deficiencies that befall the morally responsible and others, are from Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He. It is good and not obscene, and there is no injustice in that. In it is rectification

for the one who knows it, so whenever it befalls the believers, there is consideration. The Justice of Allah can be determined by that, as well as His Wisdom.

It is also considered a test. This is so that Allah teaches the patient ones and others. This is because a thorough examination is that which increases the believer in firm faith, and it prompts them to supplicate to Allah. It increases them in supplication, sincere repentance and the establishment of their weakness.

It serves as a witness similar to a parent compassionately instructing his child desiring good for him. Everyone with intellect knows that it is a good thing from the parent. Moreover, Allah—Glorified be He—promises the patient a great reward due to His Grace. He—Glorified be He—says: **{Verily, the patient shall be given their reward without reckon} (Q. 39:10)**. Allah will honour them by forgiving them and converting their minor sins into good deeds. **{Good deeds do away with bad deeds} (Q. 11:114)**. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Whoever is ill for one night—Allah will expiate his sins for a year)).

The Commander of the Believers, upon him be peace, said in *Nahj al-Bal gha*:

Allah has made this illness a thing to atone your sins. This is because there is nothing in a disease that brings reward, but it only expiates sins. Regarding reward, reward is only by good words and good deeds. Verily Allah enters His slaves into Paradise due to their noble intentions and pure souls.

It is related in the two *Šah hs* on the authority of Ibn Mas' d, may Allah be pleased with him:

I said: “O Messenger of Allah, I have fallen ill with a severe illness!” He said: ((Yes. I am ill as two men are ill)). I said: “That is because you get two rewards.” He replied: ((Yes. A Muslim is not afflicted with any pain of illness except that Allah expiates his sin as you remove the leaves of a tree)).

It is also narrated that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((The believer is not afflicted by an injury and greater except that Allah raises such one in station and expiates his sin)).

When an illness occurs in a major sinner, it is simply a hastening of punishment that such one deserves. This is based on the statement of the Exalted: **{Whatsoever disaster afflicts thee—then, it is due to what thy hands hast earned} (Q. 42:30)**. The sequential article **{then}** proves that it is recompense. Similarly, Allah makes the penal applications a punishment for the disobedient. It is as He says—Exalted be He: **{...and a group amongst the believers should witness both of their punishments} (Q. 24:2)**.

The wisdom of deficiencies is that it prompts one to seek repentance, reforms such person, tests him and prompts him to remembrance. The Glorified says: **{Dost they see not that they are tried each year—once or twice—but they repent not nor do they remember?} (Q. 9:126)**; that is, We tested them with trials and exams. By means of these tests, they are called to remembrance and return to Allah, the Exalted. Nothing is renewed; rather, they fly into their punishment blindly.

The trials that afflict the morally responsible person are not like the afflictions of those who are not morally responsible, like a child for example. It is recompense from Allah, the Exalted. However, it is not recompense for any act of disobedience nor is it an ending of punishment. This is based upon the words of the Exalted: **{And for those who disbelieve—for them shall be the Fires of Hell. It is not decreed for them that they may die nor shall any punishment be lightened for them. Thus do We recompense the ungrateful} (Q. 35:36)**. If it were some type of recompense for them, it would mean that their punishment would be lightened. It would, therefore, be no benefit in that.

It is religiously obligatory upon us to believe in everything we mentioned; namely, the transcendence of Allah as well as the perfection of His Divine Justice and Wisdom. Allah is Highly Exalted above what the wrongdoers say!

### [Divine Promise and Threat]

It is religiously obligatory for the morally responsible person to believe in the truth of Allah's promise of Paradise to the believers, as well as their eternal dwelling therein. There is no disagreement in this from those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. It is amongst those things that are necessarily known in the religion. It is based upon His statements—Exalted be He: **{Regarding the one who fears the position of his Lord and prevents himself from his lowly desires, verily, Paradise shall be his destination} (Q. 79:40-41)** and **{Verily, those who believe and work righteous deeds—for them shall be Blessed Paradise. Therein shall they abide and they shall not desire a change therefrom} (Q. 18:107-108).**

It is religiously obligatory to believe in the truth of Allah's threat of eternal confinement to the fires of Hell for the disbelievers and disobedient. Otherwise, it counters the decisive verses of Allah and belies them. Whoever belies a verse of the Qur'an is a disbeliever by consensus. He—Exalted be He—says: **{It shall be said: “Enter the gates of Hell, therein to abide forever!” How vile is the destination of those that had excessive pride!} (Q. 39:72).**

**{Whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and exceed the limits—He shall place him into the Fire, therein to abide forever! He will have a contemptible punishment} (Q. 4:14).** **{Whosoever deliberately kills a believer, his payment shall be Hell, therein to abide forever. The Anger and Curse of Allah shall be upon them. He will prepare for them a great punishment} (Q. 4:93).** **{Verily, the righteous shall be in blessedness and the wicked shall be in the Hellfire. They will burn therein on the Day of Payment. And never shall they be removed therefrom} (Q. 82:13-16).** The term **{wicked}** is general and refers to all who persist in sin.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{If those who are unjust could but see—when they see the punishment—that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment! When those who were followed [i.e. worshipped] shall disassociate themselves from those who worshipped them and they see the punishment with their means being severed, those that followed shall say: “Had we only had a return, we would have disassociated from them as they disassociated from us!” Allah will show them their deeds while they are regretful. They will not come out of the Fire} (Q. 2:165-167).** **{Certainly not! Whosoever earns evil and is encompassed by his sin—they are the Companions of the Fire. They shall abide therein forever} (Q. 2:81).** It is the disobedient one who is encompassed by sin and wicked deeds. The Qur'an has many verses in which the eternal destination is the Fire.

Regarding the Sunnah, it is narrated that a group of Muslims and Jews mentioned the matter of punishment. Each group claimed that Allah—Glorified be He—would turn their sins into good deeds and that they will be pardoned due to their precedence in faith in Allah and His Messenger and due to the virtue of their righteousness. He—Exalted be He—revealed the verse: **{It may not be thy hopes nor the hopes of the People of the Book; those who do evil will be requited thereof. Ye shall not find any patron or helper other than Allah} (Q. 4:123).** Allah informed them that their hopes of pardon from their bad deeds are false hopes. Allah responds to the People of the Book and the Murji'ites who resemble them and allow themselves to be seduced.

Then, He—Exalted be He—says: **{They say: “The Fire shall not touch us except for a number of days!” Say: “Hast thou taken a contract from Allah? He never breaks His contracts! Dost thou say about Allah that which ye know not?” Certainly not! Whosoever earns evil and is encompassed by his sin—they are the Companions of the Fire. They shall abide therein forever-} (Q. 2:80-81).** Allah, the Great, has spoken the truth! The one who belies His Promises and Threats is a liar! Whoever believes contrary to that has attributed a lie to Allah. It is an obscenity, and Allah—Exalted be He—does not commit obscenities.

This is verified by his [i.e. the Prophet's] statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((Whoever commits suicide by poison will poison himself in the fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever commits suicide by throwing himself from a mountain shall keep on throwing himself from a mountain in the fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever commits suicide by stabbing himself shall keep on stabbing himself in the fire of Hell forever and ever. Whoever whips someone in front of an unjust ruler—Allah will cause that whip to become a snake that is seventy cubits long and it will afflict him in the fires of Hell forever and ever. He will have a severe punishment)).

This is simply applied to their acts of disobedience.

### [Concerning faith (*al-Im n*)]

Faith is a statement with the tongue, belief in the heart and performing the pillars. He—Glorified be He—says: **{The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts tremble. When His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith and they rely upon their Lord; those who establish the prayer and spend from what We have provided for them. It is those who are truly believers}** (Q. 8:2-4). And He-Exalted be He—says: **{Successful are the believers—those who are in their prayers lowly; those who from vanity turn away; those who for purification work; those who guard their private parts except from their spouses and the ones who their right hands possess being therefore blameless, whereas those who seek to go beyond that are transgressors; those who are to their trusts and covenants faithful; and those who are to their prayers preservers}** (Q. 23:1-9).

The true believers are those who fit these characteristics. Whoever only professes with the tongue is a hypocrite. Whoever only professes with the tongue and believes in the heart is a disobedient person. The one who avoids all of this is a disbeliever. Every type has a title that applies to them in this world. All of them will be in the Fire. The believer is restricted by the term **{are only those}**.

Belief and submission (*al-isl m*) mean the same, as in the statement of the Exalted: **{And then We brought out from it the believers that were there, for We did not find in it anyone who submitted (*al-muslim n*) save one house}** (Q. 51:35-36). He—Exalted be He—says: **{Whosoever follows a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him. He shall be in the Hereafter amongst the losers}** (Q. 3:85).

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Islam is built upon five pillars)). This is a well-known *had th*. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((Belief is in seventy parts. The best of them is to say: “There is no god but Allah.” The weakest of them is to remove harm from the road. Modesty is a part of belief)).

It is narrated on the authority of Ja’far as-Š diq, upon him be peace, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Whoever completes his ritual ablution, perfects his prayer, renders the purification dues (*az-zak t*), guards his tongue, suppresses his anger and observes the advice of *Ahl al-Bayt* of his Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny—he will have completed the rights of faith, and the doors of Paradise will be open to him)).

Another explicit proof that faith is not complete without good deeds is the statement of the Exalted: **{...those who believe and work righteous deeds...}** (Q. 2:277). There are other examples in the verses and narrated traditions.

It increases and decreases. Regarding its increasing, the Exalted says: **{...and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and upon their Lord they rely}** (Q. 8:2). If something increases, it mandates that it can decrease.

He [i.e. the Prophet] said: ((Women are deficient in intellect, shares and religion)). Regarding deficiency in religion, it is because there are times when they don’t pray. Their obligatory and supererogatory acts of worship are deeds that complete their faith.

The major sinners from the Community of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, like the one who drinks intoxicants, the fornicator, and similar are—according to Islamic Law—known as wicked (*fujj r*) and defiantly disobedient (*fuss q*). They are not known as believers based upon the statement of the Exalted: **{Is the one who believes like the one who is disobedient? They are not the same. Regarding the one who believes and works righteous deeds, to them belongs Paradise as a destination due to what they used to do. Regarding those who are disobedient, their destination shall be the Fire. Anytime they desire to exit therefrom, they shall be returned to it. It shall be said to them: “Taste ye the punishment of the Fire that ye belied!”}** (Q. 32:18-20).

The believer merits praise, magnification and reward. They do not merit tasting that due to disobedience to Allah—Exalted be He. However, Allah commands them to observe their boundaries and torments them. The people’s witnessing against such person during punishment is to frighten and dissuade them. They are called “ingrates” (*kuff r ni’ma*).

It is narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((The fornicator is not a believer while he is fornicating. The one who drinks alcohol is not a believer while he drinks. A thief is not a believer while he steals. The one who drinks intoxicants is not a believer while he is drinking intoxicants. When he does that, faith exits from his heart. If he repents to Allah, Allah will turn to him)).

He was asked: “O Messenger of Allah, is he a disbeliever?” He replied: ((No)). He was asked: “Is he believer?” He replied: ((No)). He was asked: “What is he?” He replied: ((A defiantly disobedient person)). This is an explicit statement regarding designation.

The hypocrite is a disbeliever, as Allah explicitly states. He warns regarding their disbelief. He makes the lowest level of Hell for them. It’s amazing that the Qur’an mentions in the beginning of *Al-Baqara* (Q. 2) that the believers are specified by their belief. Then it follows by explicitly mentioning the disbelievers and their disbelief. Afterwards, it mentions the hypocrites and spends almost thirteen verses downgrading their description, lying, jesting and opposition to Allah. They are likened to a calamity filled with darkness, thunder and lightning. Allah berates them in many verses, and they are wedged between the status of a believer and that of a disbeliever.

The chapter *Al-Mun fiq n* (Q. 63) was revealed about them. Their affliction is made great by being mixed with the believers. They are belied, and their testimonies are suspect because what they utter from their tongues is not what’s in their hearts. Their oaths are acts of disobedience, insomuch that the chapter *At-Tawba* (Q. 9) ridicules them and describes them as humiliated. This is because their state of abomination is worse than that of the disbelievers and the disobedient. Showing-off is a part of hypocrisy.

It is narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((To Allah, the two-faced person has no face)). **{And Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are liars} (Q. 63:1). {Sufficient is Allah for a Witness} (Q. 4:79). {Verily, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest level of the Fire, and ye shall never find a helper for them} (Q. 4:145). {They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah destroy them! How deluded are they!} (Q. 63:4). {To Allah belongs the dignity, as well as to His Messenger and the believers. However, the hypocrites know not} (Q. 63:8).**

#### [Concerning repentance (*at-Tawba*)]

Repentance is obligatory upon all disobedient people based upon intellectual and textual proof. It removes harm from the soul. Its removal is obligatory similarly. The greatest harm to be removed is the punishment of Allah—Exalted be He—as well as the permanent stay in the Fire. Allah says: **{O ye who believe, repent to Allah with sincere repentance} (Q. 66:8)**. There are other explicit examples that have come similar to this.

It is religiously obligatory to constantly seek repentance due to consistency of disobedience. This is because the disobedient person is reminded of its necessity at every moment. If one does not do that, he will be condemned and would repeat other acts of disobedience.

It [i.e. repentance] is to regret an obscene action and the avoidance of an obligation as well as the determination to not return to the acts of disobedience as long as one lives. It is accepted with sincerity while in every time keeping in mind death and the presence of angels to take his spirit. It is as what has been narrated in the Prophetic tradition, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, when he was asked about the limit of repentance:

((Whoever repents a year before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents half a year before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a month before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a week before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents a day before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents an hour before he dies, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. Whoever repents before the approach of death, Allah will accept his repentance—even if they are many. **{...then, they repent soon after. They are those whom Allah shall turn to, and Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise} (Q. 4:17).**

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((That which is before death is **{soon after}**)).

Repentance will not be accepted from the one at the time that their souls are extracted. He—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{...the Day they shall see the angels. There shall be no glad tidings for the criminals. They shall say: “Denied and prevented!” (Q. 25:22);** that is, prevented and prohibited. And He—Glorified be He—says: **{Repentance shall not be for those who commit evil deeds up until the time of death approaches them and they say: “I repent now!” nor [shall it be for] those who die as disbelievers. They are those for whom We have prepared a painful punishment} (Q. 4:18).** This applies to acts of disobedience absolutely by consensus. This is based upon the words of the Exalted: **{Verily, I am All-Forgiving of the one who repents, believes and works righteous deeds...};** that is,



sincere repentance and not something that just resembles it. **{...Then, He guides him} (Q. 20:82)**; that is, He causes him to remain on it [i.e. guidance]. There are other verses similar to this.

Allah substitutes evil deeds for good deeds, as he—Exalted be He—says: **{...except the one who repents, believes and works righteous deeds. They are those for whom Allah will substitute their evil deeds for righteous deeds. Allah is All-Forgiving and All-Merciful} (Q. 25:70)**. One may ask: “How can evil deeds be substituted for good deeds?” It is said that the outward meaning is that the one with many sins who repents will have more good deeds than the one with few sins who repented. I say that this is not the correct interpretation. The intended meaning is that, by means of repentance, Allah will substitute them from the state of disbelief and disobedience to that of obedience, God-wariness and belief. This is the definitive meaning of **{righteous deeds}**. It is also said that the fornicator will be substituted for a righteous person, the one who kills an idolater will be substituted for one who kills a Muslim, and so forth.

Another condition for repentance is that it takes place for sins generally. This is based on the word of the Exalted: **{...he repents to Allah with accepted repentance} (Q. 25:71)**. It is a certain and great benefit for one’s repentance to be accepted. This means that He—Glorified be He—knows sincerity and He accepts it and is pleased with the repentant. **{Verily, Allah loves the repentant, and He loves those who purify themselves} (Q. 2:222)**.

One is to seek forgiveness completely. It is not sufficient for one to simply seek forgiveness only by words; rather, the heart is to precede the tongue. True determination is turning from it. **{Verily, He knows what is secret and hidden} (Q. 20:7)**. **{He knows what is hidden from the eyes and what is concealed in the chests} (Q. 40:19)**.

It is narrated in *Nahj al-Bal gha* that the Commander of the Believers and Master of the Appointees, ‘Ali bin Abi lib, upon him be peace, heard a man seeking forgiveness. He, upon him be peace, said:

May your mother be bereaved of you! Do you know what seeking forgiveness is? Seeking forgiveness is a degree of the people of high station. It is a phrase that means six things: First, it is the regret of the past sin. Second, it is the firm determination to avoid returning to it. Third, it is to return the rights to creation so that you meet Allah in a state of purity where none has any claim against you. Fourth, it is that you fulfil every duty that you neglected in order to complete your obligation in respect to it. Fifth, it is that you attend to the flesh that has flourished on unlawful nourishment so that it melts away as a result of grief and your skin adheres to your bones, after which new flesh grows in its place. Sixth, it is that your body taste the pain of obedience in the same way that it earlier tasted the pleasure of sins. It is only after then that you say: “O Allah, forgive me!”

I say that the meaning of his statement, upon him be peace, is that the repentance of the near friends of Allah is the highest level of repentance. Regret and the determination to not return to it are sufficient. Regarding the observance of rights, this is absolute. In that are many fine points, but this is not the place to go into details.

#### **[Concerning the Intercession (*ash-Shaf’a*)]**

The Intercession of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, mentioned in the narrated traditions will not be for any except the believers. It will not be for the one who persists in major sins. This is explicit in the verses of the Qur’an. He—Glorified be He—says: **{But they who have earned evil deeds, the recompense of an evil deed is its equal. Humiliation will cover them. They will have no protector from Allah.} (Q. 10:27)**. That is, they will not find anyone to prevent them from punishment. **{It will be as though their faces are covered by pieces of the night; dark. They will be the Companions of the Fire, therein to abide forever} (Q. 10:27)**.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{For the unjust there shall be no friend or intercessor obeyed} (Q. 40:18)**; that is, they will be prevented from intercession. The disbeliever and disobedient person are both unjust. The proof for this is the statement of the Exalted: **{The disbelievers are unjust} (Q. 2:254)**, **{Whosoever transgresses the boundaries of Allah, he is unjust to himself} (Q. 65:1)**. **{We were not unjust to them; rather, they are unjust to themselves} (Q. 11:101)**.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{For the unjust there shall be no helper} (Q. 2:270)**. **{Canst thou save one who is in the Fire?} (Q. 39:19)**. **{...no soul shall recompense for the other} (Q. 2:48)**. Then, the Exalted says: **{...nor shall it be benefitted by intercession, nor shall they be helped} (Q. 2:123)**. The meaning of **{they shall be helped}** is “he shall help them.” The words “soul” and “intercession” are indefinite nouns which means that it is general and applies to both disbeliever and disobedient.

He—Exalted be He—says: **{...and never shall they be removed from it} (Q. 82:16)**. If the intercession was for them, they will be removed from it. These explicit verses as well as others prove that the intercession will not be for the disbelievers or disobedient. This is because it would contradict the decisive verses of the Qur'an, and that is impermissible. There is no disagreement among the Muslims concerning that. If he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, were to intercede for any of the unjust and advocate for any of those of falsehood, this would belie the verses if he is obeyed or it would demote his role if he is not obeyed.

According to collective consensus, his intercession is accepted and the Praiseworthy Station (*al-maqam al-mahmud*) that Allah promised him belongs to him. This is based on His words: **{Perhaps thy Lord shall raise thee to a Praiseworthy Station} (Q. 17:79)**.

The Intercession is for the believers. Those other than them will not receive the Intercession because the disobedient sinner is disqualified from such. Allah disassociates from such person, and He is an enemy of Allah. Allah negates belief from one who loves and associates with such person. The Exalted says: **{Ye shall not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having mutual affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger—even if it be their fathers, sons, brothers and tribes. They are those for whom Allah has decreed belief in their hearts, and He has supported them by a Spirit from Him. He shall enter them into Paradise under which rivers flow; therein to abide forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. They are those who are the party of Allah. Is not the party of Allah the successful?} (Q. 58:22)**. **{O ye who believe, take not Mine enemies and thine enemies as associates—inclining to them with mutual affection} (Q. 60:1)**. **{Obey not the sinful amongst them, nor the ungrateful} (Q. 76:24)**. If he were to intercede for a disqualified person, it would mean that Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, is pleased with him as well as has affection and love for such person. It would imply he loves someone who Allah has disqualified. Whoever assumes such about him has attributed a great sin.

If the Intercession is not for the unjust, it is for the believers. By means of the Prophet's intercession, Allah will increase their virtue as well as raise their stations. Allah will increase them as a virtue and grace from Him.

There are explicit verses that show that it will be the believers. Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—says: **{They cannot intercede for one unless He is pleased with him. They are—out of humility--apprehensive} (Q. 21:28)**. He negates the angels' intercession except for the ones He is pleased with. The Exalted says: **{...for Allah is not pleased with the disobedient folk} (Q. 9:96)**. Allah describes the Bearers of His Throne and those around Him in *Sura al-Mu'minun* because they glorify their Lord, praise Him and believe in Him. They seek forgiveness for those who believe. **{“Our Lord, Thy Mercy and Knowledge encompass all things! Therefore, forgive those who repent and turn towards Thy path. Protect them from the punishment of Hell! O Lord, enter them into the paradise of Eden that Thou hast promised them, as well as the righteous from their fathers, spouses and offspring. Verily, Thou art the Most Mighty, the All-Wise. Divert them from the evils, and whosoever is wary of the evils on that Day, He shall be merciful unto him. That is the Great Achievement!”} (Q. 40:7-9)**.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((My intercession will be for three among my Community: a man who loves my Ahl al-Bayt with his heart and tongue, a man who fulfils their needs when they seek a need from him, a man who fights along with them with his sword)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Whoever abuses me concerning my Ahl al-Bayt, has abused Allah. Whoever assists their enemies in abusing them has made war against Allah and His Messenger. Such person will not receive my intercession)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((There are two groups from my Community that will not receive my intercession, and no one will intercede for them: an oppressive ruler and an extremist renegade in the religion)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((The closest to me on the Day of Judgment, as well as the most deserving of my intercession is the one who is most truthful in speech, best in character and faithful regarding trusts. Out of the people, they are the closest to me)).

It says in *Safnat al-Hakim* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas from 'Umar bin al-Khattab that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Verily, I am the holder of your prevention from the Fire, and you will precede me towards the Fire. You will be gathered around it like the gathering of moths. I will be in a hurry to provide you prevention. I will await you at the Pool, and you will be turned from me exempted and dejected. I will recognise you by your names and signs just as a man recognises his camel from a group of camels. Some of you will be taken to the left. I will plead for you to the Lord of the Worlds: 'O Lord, my group! O Lord, my community!'" And He will say: "O Muhammad, you do not know what they did after you! Verily, they regressed after you!" One of you carrying a bleating sheep will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: "O Muhammad, O Muhammad!" I will say: "I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!" One of you carrying a braying camel will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: "O Muhammad, O Muhammad!" I will say: "I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!" One of you carrying a neighing horse will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: "O Muhammad, O Muhammad!" I will say: "I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!" One of you carrying meagre dates will recognise me on the Day of Judgment, and will call out: "O Muhammad, O Muhammad!" I will say: "I am prevented by Allah from doing anything for you!"))).

That proves that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, will not intercede except for the believers.

If you say that it makes more sense for the Intercession to be for those who deserve punishment, I say that logic dictates that the Intercession is unsuitable for the one who persists in sin, is involved with an oppressive ruler and kills children while not repenting for such.

### [Pertaining to the Prophets]

It is religiously obligatory for the morally responsible person to believe in the truthfulness of Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, as well as believe in the previous Prophets and the scriptures that Allah sent to some of them. It is a specific testimony that he was a Messenger from Allah to humans and jinn (*ath-thaqalayn*). Everything that he conveyed was revealed to him from Allah, and it is religiously obligatory to follow and act upon everything that he conveyed of the Pure Law and Established Religion.

It is as He—Glorified be He—says: **{...and verily, ye guide towards the straight path—the path of Allah, to Whom belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Is it not to Allah doth all matters return?} (Q. 42:52-53).** That is because of the claim of Prophethood and Messengership and because Allah has aided him with many miracles. It is that by which Allah magnifies him and proves true the witness to the truth of the Book of Allah—Majestic and Powerful be He. It is that which is recited during periods of the night and at the ends of the day. It is not only increased by much recital and repeating, it is by seriousness and fluency, so its reader and listener won't be bored, and its recited verses increase the believer in more faith.

### [Concerning belief in the Prophets]

It is religiously obligatory to believe in and hold true that which came from all of the Prophets, the Scriptures, and everything revealed before the Qur'an. That which Allah orders in His Mighty Book is that which confirms the Scriptures and a witness that proves their truthfulness. Allah says: **{Say: "We believe in Allah and whatsoever was revealed to us and whatsoever was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Descendants, as well as that which was given unto Moses and Jesus and whatsoever was given unto the Prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction between any one of them. We are to it submissive"} (Q. 2:136).**

The Exalted says—in recognition of the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: **{The Messenger has believed in that which was revealed unto him from his Lord, and the believers [believe]. All have believed in Allah, His Angels, His Scriptures and His Messengers. "We make no distinction between any one of His Messengers." And they say: "We hear and we obey. Thy forgiveness, our Lord! To Thee is the destination} (Q. 2:285).**

### [Concerning the status of our Prophet, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny]

Our Prophet, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, is the best of the Prophets, upon them be peace. This is because Allah took the covenant with the Prophets to believe in him and help him. Allah, the Glorified, says: **{...When Allah took a covenant of the Prophets: "Whatsoever I give unto thee of Scripture and Wisdom, then there comes unto thee a Messenger confirming that which is with thee, ye must believe in him and help him." He said: "Hast thou acknowledged and taken upon thyself My promise?" They said: "We acknowledge." He replied: "So, bear witness, and I am with thee amongst the witnesses} (Q. 3:81).** Also, he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Adam and those other than him will be under my banner on the Day of Judgment)). He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said: ((I am the master of the children of Adam and that is no boast)) and other than that. The implication is to indicate headship.

He is also the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers. This is explicitly stated in the Book of Allah, the Glorified. **{Muhammad is not the father of any one of thy men. However, He is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets} (Q. 33:40).** Every believer knows this.

### [Concerning the Angels]

The Angels, upon them be peace, are better than the Prophets, upon them be peace. This is based upon the statement of the Exalted: **{They doth not disobey Allah in that which He commands them. They doeth that which they are commanded to do} (Q. 66:6)** and **{The Christ would never deny that he is a slave of Allah nor would the close Angels} (Q. 4:172).** The Angels would not be conjoined unless they have a lofty status. The one knowledgeable of the nuances of Arabic knows this.

The Prophets, upon them be peace, committed minor faults as Allah—Gloried and Exalted be He—described in His Noble Book. The narrated traditions mention the distinctions of the Angels as well as

their worship and tirelessness. Among them is one who reveals to the Prophets. It is narrated in *Nahj al-Bal gha* from the Appointee, may Allah ennoble his face in Paradise, regarding the Angels:

Some of them are in prostration and do not bow. Others bow and do not stand up. Some of them are in lines and do not leave their position. Others glorify Allah and do not get tired. The sleep of the eye does not affect them, nor do the slip of intellect, tiredness of the body or the heedlessness or forgetfulness.

Among them are those who Allah entrusts with His inspiration and they are the holding places of His Message. There are those who carry out His orders and injunctions. Among them are those who protect His slaves and guard the doors of His Gardens. Among them are those also whose feet are fixed on earth but their necks are in the highest heavens. Their limbs are stretched out on all sides...

What we are responsible to know regarding this issue is not conclusive. But the scholars mentioned and indicated it. Regarding this issue, there are three positions. One is that the Angels are better than the Prophets---this is the most correct. Another position is that the Prophets are better. Another position is more detailed and says that our Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, is better than the Angels but the Angels are better than the rest of the Prophets, upon them be peace.

It is also said that the correct belief is that both the Angels and Prophets are of great virtue and one does not know the extent—whether more or less—except Allah, the Glorified. This is due to there being no advantage in being morally responsible to believe in that.

#### [Concerning the Qur'an]

The Noble Qur'an is that which is included in a book of pages, recited in the prayer niches, existent in our midst and protected in the hearts of the believers. It is the Word of the Lord of the Worlds which was revealed by the Spirit to the heart of Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, so that it can be a warning in a clear Arabic tongue.

It is created and brought into existence because the letters are sequenced and the sounds are not eternal. It is sequenced and arranged. Everything that is sequenced and arranged implies that a part came before another part. Since this is the case, it necessitates discontinuation, which proves that it was brought into existence. That is evident because Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—brought it about after it was non-existent. If something existed after it hadn't existed, it was brought into existence.

The textual proof is the statement of the Exalted: **{Ha M m. By the Clear Book. Verily, We made it an Arabic Qur'an that thou may understand} (Q. 43:1-3)**. The Exalted explicit says that He **{made it an Arabic Qur'an}**, and **{made}** means "created." This is proven by the words of the Exalted: **{All praise is due to Allah, the One who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light} (Q. 6:1)**.

The Exalted also says in *Ash-Shu'ara*: **{And there comes not to them a Reminder existent (muhdath) from the Most Gracious, except that they turn away from it} (Q. 26:5)** and **{There has come unto the people their accounting while they are heedless and turning away. And there comes not to them a Reminder existent from their Lord except that they listen to it and jest} (Q. 21:1-2)**. These are explicit texts that don't need interpretation.

The Exalted also says: **{A chapter which We hath sent down and laid it down clearly} (Q. 24:1)**. Sending something down can only apply to in-time creation as proven in the statement of the Exalted: **{We hath sent down iron—in it is great power and benefits for the people} (Q. 57:25)**. The Qur'an is replete with terms such as **{We made}** and **{We inspired}**. Inspiration is a decisive action from Allah.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Allah has not created in the heavens and the earth anything greater than the Verse of the Celestial Chair (*ayat al-kursi*))).

It is also related that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Allah was when there was nothing. Then He created the Reminder)). The Reminder is a name for the Qur'an, as proven from the statement of the Exalted: **{Verily, We have revealed the Reminder, and We shall protect it} (Q. 15:9)**. This verse explicitly states that it is protected. Something that is pre-existent has no need to be protected due to its quality of pre-existence. The Exalted also says: **{...and it is a Reminder for thee and thy people} (Q. 43:44)**.



Another proof for that is the statement of the Exalted: **{Allah hath sent down the best of speech—a consistent Scripture oft-repeated} (Q. 39:23)**. It is describe as being sent down firstly. Then, He says: **{the best}**, and ‘best’ is an attribute of actions. He also describes it as **{speech}**. This term (*had th*) is the same as the term that denotes in-time creation (*al-muhdath*). It is explicit in what we mentioned. He calls it **{Scripture}**, and scripture is compiled. A scripture is called such because of its compilation. That which is compiled cannot be pre-existent. He says **{consistent}**—that is, some parts resemble other parts in inimitability. These are all proofs of the truthfulness of what is manifest and the necessity of it having been brought into existence.

#### [Concerning the Imamate]

Imamate succeeds Prophethood in the sense that it is necessary for it. This is because the imams, upon them be peace, take the place of Prophets in the declaration of Divine Law. They revive what has been neglected in it and fight the one who departs from it. This is not without the permission of the Lawgiver and His command.

The results are that the penal code is established, the Friday prayers are instituted, the rites of Islam are manifested and the rights are forcibly taken from the one who withholds them. Also, he oversees general affairs, such as the establishing of mosques, endowments, roads and the institution of Islamic Law. He monitors the affairs of the orphans and the like. He appoints governors and suppresses tyrants.

If there were no just imams, Islamic Law would vanish, objectionable sins and the rule of falsehood would manifest and the rights of inheritance would be squandered. Even until now, news of such has come to us in large numbers from countries in which there are no imams ruling. This is because the Lawgiver commands obedience to the one who establishes affairs. As the Exalted says: **{O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger as well as those of authority amongst thee} (Q. 4:59)**. They are the just imams. There cannot be a time where there is no imam who meets the criteria. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!

#### [Concerning the Imamate of ‘Ali, upon him be peace]

The only one who deserved the Imamate after him [i.e. the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, was the Commander of the Believers and Master of the Appointees, ‘Ali bin Abi lib—may Allah ennoble his face in Paradise! This is based upon clear and explicit designation as well as many virtues that none of the Companions can share. If that is the case, then he is the best. If he is the best, then he is the most deserving of it due to his being the best. This is proven both intellectually and textually.

Regarding the explicit designation from the Book of Allah, the Exalted says: **{Verily, thy only Guardian is Allah, His Messenger, and those who believe—those who establish the prayer and render the alms while bowing (wa hum r ki’ n)} (Q. 5:55)**. No one gave their ring as charity while bowing in the prayer except him, upon him be peace. This is made explicit by truthful imams, exegetes and historians.

The verse mentions the plural pronoun as a general application to a specific person. For example, the Exalted mentions in the Noble Qur’an: **{...they are the people who say to them: “Verily, the people have gathered around thee!”} (Q. 3:173)**. The term **{they are the people}** refers to Na’ m bin Mas’ d. The Exalted also says: **{They are those who say: “Spend nothing on those with Allah’s Messenger until they are forced to leave!” And to Allah belongs the heavens and earth. But the hypocrites understand not} (Q. 63:7)**. However, this refers to one hypocrite, ‘Abdullah bin Ubay.

The word **{Guardian}** brings together two intended meanings. Any word that brings two intended meanings together must be interpreted to mean both meanings and not just one. In the verse, it means “one with the right to one’s affairs” and “helper.” Therefore, the meaning of the verse is: “Verily, your helper and the one with the right to your affairs is Allah, His Messenger and ‘Ali bin Abi lib—may Allah ennoble his face in Paradise.” The imam is the one with the right to affairs.

The explicit designation in the Sunnah is his [i.e. the Prophet’s] statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, when addressing the people at the pond (*ghad r*) of Khumm. He lifted ‘Ali’s arm, upon him be peace, and said: ((Do I not have more authority over you than you have over yourselves?)) They said: “Indeed, O Messenger of Allah!” He then said:

((Whosoever I have authority over (*mawla*), ‘Ali has authority over. O Allah, associate with those who associate with him, and oppose those who oppose him! Assist those who assist him, and abandon those who abandon him!))

This report is mass-transmitted (*mutaw tir*) according to the majority. It is an explicit designation of the Imamate of ‘Ali—may Allah ennoble his face.

The phrase “have authority over” (*mawla*) is also a joint word. What we said earlier about **{Guardian}** in the noble verse similarly applies to this word. His statement “Assist those who assist him...” furthermore contextualises that the meaning is “one with the right to affairs.”

Also, Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Your position to me is as Aaron was to Moses except that there will be no prophet after me)). There is also the *Hadith* of Brotherhood. He left him behind in the military expedition of Tabuk, which was far away and difficult. [The Prophet] saw that he desired to go to the expedition. Then, he said: ((Are you not pleased that your position to me is as Aaron was to Moses?)). He replied: “Indeed.” And he left him behind.

Allah exposed the hypocrites in this expedition, and some of them began to differ. The intended meaning of the position of Aaron to Moses is indicated in His statement: **“Take my place among my people and rectify them. Follow not the way of the corrupters.”** (Q. 7:142). There is no doubt in the mind that if Aaron were to live after Moses, he would have been the caliph after him, upon him be peace.

There are many other proofs that he [i.e. ‘Ali] deserved the Imamate after [the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, which amounts to large numbers—both wording and meaning. This is just a brief summary to not burden.

#### **[Concerning the Imamates of al-Hasan and al-Hussein, upon them be peace]**

The imam after him, upon him be peace, without interruption is his son, al-Hasan. Then, it is al-Hussein, upon them be peace. This is based upon his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((Al-Hasan and al-Hussein are two imams—whether standing or sitting. But their father is greater than the both of them)).

The acceptance of this report is mutually agreed upon by both friend and foe alike. This is an explicit report regarding their Imamates and the Imamate of their father before them. It is for this that one cannot disregard it because he said “greater than both of them.” This denotes Imamate as is clear to the Arabic linguists. One says: “So-n-so is generous and so-n-so is greater than him;” that is, in generosity.

Concerning the soundness of their Imamates is that coming out against them is considered rebellion by consensus. It is narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said to ‘Ali, Fátima, al-Hasan and al-Hussein, upon them be peace:

((I am at war with the one who makes war against you and at peace with the one who makes peace with you)).

This is also narrated regarding al-Hasan and al-Hussein specifically with the dual pronoun.

#### **[Concerning the Imamate after al-Hasan and al-Hussein]**

After the two of them, upon them be peace, the Imamate belongs to one of their descendants who rises and summons—excluding other than them from the rest of humankind. He must be one who combines all of the conditions of the Imamate and be unprecedented in his call. He must be distinguished in the position of Imamate so that the consensus verifies its soundness and disagreement would occur for other than them.

Regarding the one who says that the imams are of the Quraish, they are to be the best of the Quraish. Regarding the one who says that it can be for the rest of the people—as the Kharijites say—they are to be the best of the people. What disproves the one who says that it is for one of the people of Islam and not other than them is the explicit designation of their distinction of position. There is no authentic, explicit designation for other than them.

The Exalted says: **{Then We cause to inherit the Book those whom We hath chosen from amongst Our slaves. From them is one who oppresses himself and from them is one who is moderate. From them is one who is foremost in goodness by the permission of Allah. That is the great virtue!}** (Q. 35:32). The Imams of the Prophetic Descendants, upon them be peace, all agree that this verse is regarding the Ahl al-Bayt, upon them be peace. The one who is **{foremost in goodness}** is the imam who unsheathes his sword in the struggle against the enemies of Allah. The **{moderate}** is the one who is moderate in his knowledge and observes his obligations to Allah. He is the one who establishes the Law of His religion and seeks the pleasure of his Lord. He demonstrates obedience. The one who **{oppresses himself}** is the one who follows the desires of his soul and inclines towards his self. This is mentioned by al-Hadi, upon him be peace, in his collection.

### [Concerning obedience to the imam]

It is religiously obligatory to obey the imam who combines all of its conditions. This is based on the statement of the Exalted: **{O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger as well as those of authority amongst thee} (Q. 4:59)**. The true imams who raise the minaret of justice and religion are **{those of authority}** among them. They enact the rulings of the Lord of the Worlds, succeed the Seal of the Prophets and expound upon that which is the Clear Book and Sunnah of the Master of Messengers. It has been mentioned that Allah commands that one refer to them when there is disagreement so that they can know the path of truth and correctness.

The people of authority are not those who seize it, rebel regarding it or usurp it from the people. They do not establish oppression nor do they turn away from the establishment of Islamic Law. They do not spend their days partaking in frivolity, entertainment, music and drinking intoxicants. They do not take the property of Allah's slaves or the state's money. It is religiously obligatory to escape from them and religiously prohibited to obey them and take anything from them.

An-N ir al-Haqq narrated on the authority of Ja'far bin Muhammad as-Š diq, upon them be peace, that Abu Maryam asked him about **{those of authority}** who are religiously obligatory to obey. He replied: "Ali, as well as al-Hasan, al-Hussein and their descendants." Upon them be peace. This is mentioned by Abul-Q sim al-Basti in the book *Al-B hir*.

Also, al-H kim narrated on the authority of Ja'far bin Muhammad as-Š diq, upon them be peace, regarding the statement of the Exalted: **{Say: "This is my way. I invite towards Allah with insight—I and the one who follows me"} (Q. 12:108)**. He said:

It refers to our Guardianship—the Ahl al-Bayt. No one can object to it except the astray and none can diminish from 'Ali, upon him be peace, except the deceitful.

It is also based on the statement [of the Prophet], peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((Verily, I leave behind for you that which if you were to hold to it, you would never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my Descendants—my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily, the All-Subtle and All-Aware informed me that the two of them will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pool)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, stated that the Descendants, upon them be peace, will never separate from the Mighty Book until the Day of Judgment. This proves the infallibility of their collective. As for the proof of their Imamate, this is understood from the command to "hold to" them. This report is mass-transmitted and narrated by both friend and foe.

It is also based on his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((The likeness of my Ahl al-Bayt is of Noah's ark. Whoever boards it is saved and whoever differs from it drowns and perishes. The one who fights against us in the Last Days will be like the one who fights alongside the Antichrist)).

There is no disagreement among the scholars of the Messenger's Progeny and their partisans regarding the authenticity of this report. This is a proof of their infallibility. Therefore, the Imamate is established by their infallibility and not for other than them. They are the Ark of Salvation from drowning. The Imamate protects the religion and guards the Community.

Regarding the statement: ((be like the one who fights alongside the Antichrist)), this proves that the one who fights them is considered a rebel like the Antichrist and his companions, as is known from narrated reports.

Ad-Daylami, upon him be peace, narrated in the book *Qaw 'id Aq 'id Ahl al-Bayt*:

The narrated traditions regarding the Ahl al-Bayt, upon them be peace, that the jurists agree upon amount to 1,605 narrated traditions. This excludes those narrated traditions narrated about them, upon them be peace, by their partisans, may Allah be pleased with them. Included in that are those that refer to 'Ali, upon him be peace, which amount to 605 narrated traditions. The rest of them are regarding the Descendants, upon them be peace.

From verified history, one finds that in every century there was one of them who stood up and invited towards Allah with insight.

### [Recognising the saved sect]

It is narrated from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, in a number of chains of narration from a large group of Companions. This includes: the Appointee, may Allah ennoble his

face; Ibn 'Abbās; Abu Hurayra; 'Awf bin Malik; Ibn 'Umar; Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, Jubair, Anas and others. They related that he said:

((The Community of my brother Moses divided into 71 sects. The Community of my brother Jesus divided into 72 sects. My Community will divide into 73 sects. All of them will perish except one sect)).

This *hadith's* acceptance is mutually agreed upon and narrated by both friend and foe. Many scholars are aware of it. There is difference in wording in some of the narrations but there is no difference in meaning. For example, in some narrations the word ((sects)) is substituted with the word ((paths)). In some of the narrations there is an addition in which he was asked about the saved sect and he replied: ((The one which is upon what I am upon as well as my Companions)).

It is therefore religiously obligatory for us to consider recognising the saved sect so that we can follow it, tread upon its path and enter their group, if Allah wills. That way, we can believe in and follow the religion of Allah that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, had revealed unto him from Allah. It is important to know the saved sect and the one who follows the disagreements that occurred after him, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((I did not neglect anything that would bring you towards Paradise except that I showed it to you. I did not convey anything that would distance you from the Fire except that I mentioned it to you)).

After relating the *Hadith* of Division into Sects (*al-iftirāq*), Imam Ahmed bin Suleiman, upon him be peace, narrated that when the Muslims heard that, they were greatly distressed and broke out crying. They all went close to him and asked:

O Messenger of Allah, how can we be saved after you? How can we recognise the saved sect so that we can be included in it?

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, replied:

((Verily, I leave behind for you that which if you were to hold to it, you would never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my Descendants—my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily, the All-Subtle and All-Aware informed me that the two of them will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pool)).

Then, this proves that they are the saved sect because he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, negated deviance from the one who continues to hold to them. He explained the saved sect which one is to join with mentioned in the *Hadith* of Division of Sects. This is also because he joined them with the Book that is a proof for the people of Islam. They are like it and the protectors of it. This is because the judgment is that one does not join two things except that they are the equal in authority. They are its interpreters.

Another strong proof is the absence of the two of them separating till the Day of Judgment. Therefore, holding to the both of them is a sure way towards the most correct and the most reliable in sound religion. Allah, the Exalted, says: **{Verily Allah only intends to prevent from thee impurity, O Ahl al-Bayt, and purify thee with a thorough purification} (Q. 33:33)**. This noble verse proves that Allah only intends to purify them, and His intention is fulfilled. If it is sound that they are purified, then they are the sources of salvation, and one is to tread their path, follow their guidance and faithfully adhere to their way regarding religious beliefs.

The Traditions of the Cloak (*al-Kisā'*) prove their distinction. Allah had purified their sins by His Grace and Acceptance. This proves that they are on the truth in their beliefs and actions. They are the sources of salvation and their consensus is a proof that is religiously obligatory to refer to.

The proofs for that are many. They include the statement of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((My Ahl al-Bayt is a source of safety for the people of the earth just as the stars are a source of safety for the people of the heavens. Woe be unto the one who abandons them and deviates from them!))

And he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((My Ahl al-Bayt is like the gate of the Hittites. Whoever enters it will be forgiven)). He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((Verily, Allah makes the descendants of every prophet from his issue. But Allah, the Exalted, has made my descendants from the issue of 'Ali bin Abi Talib)).

May Allah ennoble his face! He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((O Allah, make understanding and knowledge in my offspring and the offspring of my offspring, as well as in my seed and the seed of my seed!))

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((Do not try to teach my Ahl al-Bayt, for they are more knowledgeable than you. And do not curse them or you will go astray)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said: ((My Ahl al-Bayt is like the stars. Whenever a star rises another star falls)).

It is narrated that Ibn Mas'ud said:

Verily, for this community is a sect and group. When the Ahl al-Bayt of your Prophet join together, it comes together, and when they disperse, it disperses. If they make peace, it makes peace. When they are at war, it is at war. They are with the truth, and the truth is with them. Do not separate from them, and they will not separate from it.

It is also narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

On the Day of Judgment, a caller will call out before the Divine Throne: "O fellow creation! Verily, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: 'Be silent. How often I commanded your silence! By My Might and Majesty! By My position over the Divine Throne! It is not permissible for any among you except to love the Ahl al-Bayt—the weak ones among you, the ones forcefully deprived of their rights and the oppressed. They are those who are patient in affliction and being deprived of the right of My Messenger concerning them. Whoever comes to Me with love for them shall be granted My Paradise. Whoever comes to Me with hatred for them shall be sent down with the people of hypocrisy'").

#### **[Concerning the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice]**

The thing that unites Prophethood and the Imamate is the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. These two things are a great injunction. They are the result of Guardianship as well as the most important thing in the beginning and end. It is an injunction imposed upon every morally responsible person due to the proofs of Islamic Law. It is a religious obligation upon the imams due to the power to enforce it and implement it by force.

It is therefore religiously obligatory to promote those virtues amongst the religious obligations in which Allah promises reward, as well as to prevent those prohibited things in which Allah threatens with the pain of punishment. Allah, the Exalted, says: **{The believing men and believing women are guardians of one another. They promote virtue and prevent vice. They establish the prayer, and they render the purification dues. They obey Allah and His Messenger. They are the ones that Allah shall have mercy on. Verily, Allah is Mighty and All-Wise} (Q. 9:71).**

The hypocrites are described with the opposite. The Exalted says: **{The hypocrite men and the hypocrite women are of one another. They promote vice and prevent virtue, and they close their hands. They have forgotten Allah, and He has forgotten them. Verily, the hypocrites are defiantly disobedient} (Q. 9:67).**

He also cursed those who refrained from preventing vice, as the Glorified says: **{Cursed were those who disbelieved amongst the Children of Israel by the tongue of David and that of Jesus, the son of Mary. That is because they disobeyed and transgressed. They would not prevent the vice that they did. Wretched is the one who used to do that!} (Q. 5:78-79).**

They have conditions and a proper sequence. It is that the one who is promoted and prevented be morally responsible. This is because the pen is lifted from other than them. Such person must know what virtue and vice are. He must not be ignorant of the virtue that he is being promoted to do and the vice that he is prevented from. He must be capable and not incapable. It must also be assumed that the desired effect would be the establishing of the virtue and the removal of the vice. If the one who is promoting the virtue and preventing the vice is ignorant regarding the virtuous and vices, he must learn the virtue in order to do it and the vice in order to refrain from it. If he does not assume to know the effect then the obligation, according to Islamic Law, is lifted.

#### **[Concerning the proper sequence for promotion and prevention]**

Promotion and prevention has a sequence and it is religiously obligatory for one to observe it. First, one is to speak with a soft word or admonition. It is like the account of Moses and Aaron: **{And speak unto him with a soft word that he may remember or fear} (Q. 20:44).** This is when they were



first sent to the Pharaoh. Then, one is to speak with a tougher, more intimidating tone and threats. Then, one is to strike using a staff or the like. Then, one is to brandish the sword. Afterwards, one is to fight if the other would not stop except by it.

If it is possible, the Muslims are to help such one if he is weak, and this is the best. However, it is religiously obligatory for them to help him with promoting the virtue and preventing the vice before they engage in fighting. Allah says: **{Cooperate in righteousness and God-wariness, and do not cooperate in sin and enmity} (Q. 5:2)**. The command indicates the obligation. When it is not possible to do the first, one is to resort to the next one.

The proof for that from the Mighty Book is the statement of the Exalted: **{Let there be amongst thee a community inviting to the good—promoting virtue and preventing vice. They are the successful ones} (Q. 3:104)**. This command is general and applies to all morally responsible people at all times. If only some establish it and the rest fall short of doing so, the sin would fall upon all due to their avoidance of it. This is based upon the statement of the Exalted: **{Let those who differ from his order be wary lest tribulation afflict them or painful punishment} (Q. 24:63)**.

That is also proven from the Sunnah by his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny:

((You should promote virtue and you should prevent vice. Otherwise, Allah will give a tyrant authority over you who will not have mercy on your young and who will oppress your elders. The best of you will supplicate but they will not be answered)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((By He in whose Hand is my soul! People shall be raised from their graves in the forms of monkeys and pigs due to their treating the disobedient gently and refraining from preventing them while they were able)).

And he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((From a man in our midst shall be a people who will commit acts of disobedience in their midst. They will not take from the hand of another except that Allah will be swift in punishing them)).

And he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Whoever refrains from promoting the virtue and preventing the vice is not a believer in me, nor does he believe in the Qur'an)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((Allah will prevent the eye that sees disobedience from looking unless he changes it or departs)) that is, migrates.

The proper sequence is also proven by the statement of the Exalted: **{If two groups of believers should fight, seek reconciliation between the two. However, if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the oppressive one until they return to the command of Allah. If it [i.e. the oppressive group] returns, reconcile them in justice and act just with them} (Q. 49:9)**. And the Exalted says regarding disobedient wives: **{...advise them, separate from their beds, and chastise them} (Q. 4:34)**. First is the command to admonish; then, to depart; and third, to chastise.

### **[Concerning migration (*al-hijra*)]**

It is religiously obligatory to migrate from the lands in which acts of disobedience are manifest to those where it is hidden. The same is the case whether it is a land of disbelief or disobedience. The proof for this is the statement of the Exalted: **{As for those whom the angels take while they wrong themselves, They shall ask: "In what state were ye?" They shall reply: "We were oppressed in the land." They shall ask: "Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein?" As for such, their abode shall be Hell, an evil destination!} (Q. 4:97)**. There is no distinction between the lands of disbelief and the lands of disobedience. The reason is disobedience.

Concerning the statement **{“In what state were ye?”}** is a reprimand to them. This is because they were not upon religion and had the ability to migrate but did not migrate. The angels said to them: **{“Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein?”}** Their cries will be great.

Also, he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Migration will not discontinue until repentance discontinues. Repentance will not discontinue until the sun rises from the west)).

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said: ((Migration will not discontinue as long as the enemies fight)). Allah excuses the weak amongst men, women and children. This includes the poor, elderly as well as those who cannot find a way.

### [Punishment in the grave (*adh b al-qabr*)]

The punishment of the grave is firmly established according to the majority of the Muhammadan Descendants as well as that of the mainstream of other than them. The proof of that is the statement of the Exalted: **{Our Lord, Thou caused us to die twice and caused us to live twice} (Q. 40:16)**. One cannot die twice except that he lived in the grave and died afterwards.

It has been narrated in the Prophetic *had th*:

((The grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hellfire)).

It means that the believer is given the good news of Paradise in the grave and the disobedient is punished in it. It has also been related that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said when passing by two graves:

((There are two people being punished. They are punished for a big thing. One of them used to engage in tale-bearing (*nam ma*) and the other did not free himself of urine)).

His statement ((for a big thing)) means according to them both. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said:

((If I didn't fear that you would not bury anyone anymore, I would ask Allah to allow you to hear the punishment of the grave)).

It is also related in the *Nahj al-Bal gha* that the Commander of the Believers, 'Ali bin Abi lib—may Allah ennoble his face in Paradise—said:

Then he was wrapped in the shroud while quiet and submissive to others. Afterwards, he was placed on planks in a state beaten down by hardships and weak from sicknesses. Descendants and crowds of brothers carried him to his house of loneliness where his visitors are severed. Thereafter, those who accompanied him departed and the wailers returned. He was made to sit in his grave for fearful questioning and stumbling examination.

He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, used to seek refuge in Allah from the punishment of the grave. O Allah, we seek refuge in you from the punishment of the grave and its affliction! O Most Merciful of the merciful!

### [Concerning the Judgment]

The Judgment is that which Allah mentions in His Mighty Book. The name refers to the resurrection and revival. It is religiously obligatory to believe in it. It is the Last Day in which Allah reiterates and makes belief in it religiously obligatory. It is denied by the disbeliever. It is that which the morally responsible and deniers know as necessary knowledge regarding the truth of Allah's Threat and Promise. It is the Day of Division, the Day of Debt as well as the Day of Judgment and Justice. It is the Day of Accounting and the Day of Loss for the deniers and Victory for the God-wary. That is from the Justice and Wisdom of the Most Just. **{Then, didst thou think that We created thee out of jest and that to Us thou shalt not return?} (Q. 23:115)**. The Book of Allah is replete with this.

Allah will resurrect everyone in whom He blew the breath of spirit. This is based on the statement of the Exalted: **{There is not a beast on the earth or a bird that flies with wings except that they are communities like unto thee. We have not neglected in the Book anything. Then unto their Lord shall they be gathered} (Q. 6:38)**. Compensation is the reason for evacuation and justice for the oppressed. **{A Day in which every soul shall find what it did of good present and what it did of evil. It would desire that between it and that be a great distance. And Allah warns thee Himself. Allah is most relenting to the slaves} (Q. 3:30)**.

The Prophetic *had th* says:

((The people of Paradise will enter it as thirty-year olds—whether young or old. They will never grow older. The same is the case for the people of the Fire)).

Al-Murtaza Muhammad bin al-H di ila al-Haqq Yahya bin al-Hussein, upon them be peace, said:

As for the friends of Allah and those of His creation who did not disobey Him such as children, as well as the people of obedience, Allah will resurrect them as a perfect age.

They will be as forty year olds in their appearance. Allah will gather all the believers as thus—whether they were children or elders.

My father related to me that ‘Ali bin Abi lib, upon them be peace, said: “Allah will gather His friends on the Day of Judgment in perfected forms as they were in the life of this world. They will be forty years of age. Then, Allah will grant them that which He promised them of His reward and ample compensation.”

O Allah! Make us among those upon whom is Your blessings from the Prophets, truthful, martyrs and righteous! Make good for those who are Your friends! Gather us in their company and make us secure on the Day of Great Distress! Cause us to drink from the Pool of Your Pure Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, that drink which there’s no thirst after it! **{Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter. Protect us from the punishment of the Fire!} (Q. 2:201)**. All praise is due to Allah for His blessings that cannot be encompassed! Prayers and peace be upon the Chosen Prophet as well as his Pure Progeny! There’s no power or strength except by Allah, the Most High and Most Great!